Custody Case SCS 2012

P760013-0860

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Congress of the United States
Committee on International Relations
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

January 27, 1978

SCS
31 JAN 1978

Mr. Douglas J. Bennet, Jr.
Assistant Secretary
Congressional Relations
U.S. Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. Bennet:

Attached is a mailgram concerning a plea of Mr. and Mrs. Timothy Stoen to have their six year old son returned to them from Guyana where he is being held by the Peoples' Temple, a religious organization.

The Committee would be interested to learn if there is anything that can be done to help Mr. and Mrs. Stoen.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

Chairman

√Attachment
CJZ:jtsr

Re: Scott - John Victor Stoen
from Timothy

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY _____ DATE _____
RDS☐or XDS☐EXT. DATE: _____
TS AUTH. _____ REASON(S) _____
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED☐ RELEASABLE☐
RELEASE DENIED☐
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS _____

MAILGRAM SERVICE CENTER
MIDDLETOWN, VA. 22645

western union Mailgram

1-041756M023021 01/23/78 TLX JOSTOENEX MRSN WSHC
53 DENVER CO JAN 23

HONORABLE CLEMENT J ZABLOCKI
U S REPRESENTATIVE
2183 RAYBURN BLDG
WASHINGTON DC 20515

WE DESPERATELY PLEAD FOR YOUR HELP IN GETTING OUR SIX YEAR OLD SON, JOHN VICTOR STOEN, NOW BEING FORCIBLY HELD AGAINST OUR WILL IN GUYANA, SOUTH AMERICA BY A CERTAIN JIM JONES OF THE PEOPLES TEMPLE. DURING THE TIME THAT THE UNDERSIGNED WAS ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY FOR MENDOCINO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, WE BECAME ADHERENTS OF THE APOSTOLIC TEACHINGS OF PEOPLES TEMPLE UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF JONES. OUR SON WAS RAISED IN THE COMMUNITY OF PEOPLES TEMPLE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THOSE TEACHINGS. WE EACH LEFT THE TEMPLE WHEN IT BECAME APPARENT THAT ITS PRACTICES SERIOUSLY VIOLATED THOSE TEACHINGS, BUT JONES REFUSED TO PERMIT OUR SON TO BE RETURNED TO US.

THE SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA ON NOVEMBER 18, 1977 FOUND JONES IN VIOLATION OF ITS ORDER TO APPEAR, AND FURTHER ORDERED HIM TO IMMEDIATELY DELIVER THE CHILD TO US. THE COURT GAVE US LEAVE TO INSTITUTE CONTEMPT PROCEEDINGS, AND IT ORDERED SAN FRANCISCO DISTRICT ATTORNEY JOSEPH FREITAS, JR. TO "TAKE ALL ACTIONS NECESSARY" TO SECURE JONES' COMPLIANCE WITH THE ORDER.

JONES STILL REFUSES TO GIVE US OUR CHILD. ON JANUARY 4, 1978 WE TRAVELLED TO GUYANA TO SEE OUR SON AND AWAIT A COURT DECISION THERE. JONES REFUSED TO LET US SEE OUR SON. THE GUYANESE COURTS STILL HAVE NOT RENDERED A DECISION ON HABEAS CORPUS PROCEEDINGS BROUGHT LAST SEPTEMBER. UPON LEAVING GUYANA ON JANUARY 18, WE WERE MET BY AGENTS OF JONES AND PEOPLES TEMPLE WHO SAID IF WE RETURNED TO GUYANA WE WOULD BE KILLED.

WE EARNESTLY AND RESPECTFULLY ASK THAT YOU REQUEST THE U. S. STATE DEPARTMENT AND ANY OTHER APPROPRIATE AGENCY TO DEMAND THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF GUYANA HONOR THE ABOVE-MENTIONED UNITED STATES ORDER UNDER THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF COMITY. JONES AND ALL PARTIES INVOLVED ARE U. S. CITIZENS.

THANK YOU FROM THE BOTTOM OF OUR HEARTS.

MOST SINCERELY,

TIMOTHY AND GRACE STOEN
(PARENTS OF JOHN VICTOR STOEN)

western union Mailgram

3609 SACRAMENTO STREET
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94118
TELEPHONE: (415) 922-8200

19:36 EST

MGMCOMP MGM